BRAVE WOMEN AND YOUNG GIRLS FIGHTING IN THE CUBAN ARMY.

Mothers and Sweethearts in the Field Sharing the Dangers and Hardships of the War Against the Spanish Armies.

Havana, Cuba, April 4.—From this beautiful summer land one cry goes up which is heard over the din of battle and the clash of arms. It is the wail of the desolate Cuban women. They are mourning for their loved ones, and their tears are falling upon new-made graves throughout the island.

Their soft eyes have looked upon ghastly bonfires in which the bodies of their babies have been the fuel that fed the flames. Their cry is more eloquent than all the ruin and desolation of this beautiful land of graves. The cane fields sending their columns of flame and smoke across the stars like signal fires to the American nation are not so imperative as all this woman love going up to Heaven in a tortured cry for help.

Like the Easter lilies of Cuba, bent and stained with patriot blood, and the roses [illegible] the earth and drenched with mire, [illegible] hearts of these poor women. They are suffering, bleeding and breaking, yet they still have courage, and trust that God will send aid from America and libery to Cuba.

It is for the women and the children that these men are fighting who are so bravely holding the island in the face of an army more than three times bigger in number than they; half naked as they are, their bodies torn from the underbrush through which they walk, often with only one cartridge apiece to face a well provided foe, they are fighting with a spirit which once moved the American Army of the Revolution.

"Kill the Cuban women," says a Spanish proverb, "and there will be no more Cuban children!" These words have been muttered by many Spanish lips when outrage and massacre have raged. But the Cubans say that is just one thing which the Spaniards cannot do. They cannot create Spanish children in Cuba. And that is why the women of Cuba are the mothers of this most human revolution. They do not fear death. They would gladly die for Cuba, but their cheeks grow white at the thought of the atrocities and crimes which the Spanish soldiers employ toward the helpless. So strong is this fear that many of the women have accompanied their husbands into the fields, remembering the crimes of the late war against their sex. Men have [illegible]s and daughters there are a hundred women under Maceo and under General Gomez as well.

[illegible]ny women are nursing the sick and wounded. Some are fighting shoulder shoulder with the men. They do not [illegible]ear death one-half so much as the horrors which might await them at their homes. Their children are born upon the battle field. It was thus in the last war also. Is it a wonder, then, that the Cubans are patriots?

EVEN THE CHILDREN FIGHT.

It is one great feature of this revolution that not only the women but the children are fighting with the army. There is a list of child martyrs, baby patriots, who have been murdered by the Spanish in this cruel war which will reach to Heaven. These poor children do not die with their mothers' arms about them or their mothers' lips whispering prayers to them, but are struck down by machetes or tossed bleeding into burning corn fields. The Spanish authorities, with their usual cheap acuteness, have endeavored to make capital from the fact that there are women in the field with the Cuban army, and have spread the report that they are "Amazons," describing them as rough, masculine creatures, devoid of gentleness and modesty. This is one of the favorite lies which they are so fond of quoting. The Cuban women [illegible] the most feminine and simple women the world. They are almost childish in [illegible] love for prettiness and charm. They [illegible]r children and worship their [illegible]. But their gentleness has turned [illegible]bitter[illegible]s in many of their hearts through the sorrows that have been inflicted upon them.

Besides the women who are with the army there are any number of women in Havana to-day who are anxious to join them. They know only too well that should the Cubans take Havana the vengeance of the Spaniards would be directed to them. I have visited them in their homes in Havana and outside of the limits placed by war. I have spoken with them and have been thrilled with their courage and patriotism. I know that American women are patriotic, but these Cuban women are fierce in their patriotism and wish to take arms against the enemy who has despoiled their homes and killed their relatives. They are the "insurrectes" heart and soul, the moving spirit of the revolution. To-day Maximo Gomez carries over his heart a silken Cuban flag which he has sworn that he will never unfurl until it floats over Morro Castle.

Many of the Cuban women have lost all they possessed through this war. Their plantations have been burned and their fortunes swept away, but I heard none complain. They are willing to give everything for Cuba, and they see their sugar cane go up in smoke, and that thereby its revenue will be lost to Spain. Some of these women sold their jewels when their money was gone in order to send medicines and diet to the rebels. In every Cuban home also a sum is set aside out of each day's household money to send to the field.

PATHOS EVER PRESENT.

There are pathetic and moving incidents without number connected with this war in which women play the first part. Many of them lie in unmarked graves to-day, but their names will live in Cuban history forever. An old lady of eighty, whom I visited at her home a few miles out of Havana, showed me an American flag which she has kept carefully for years folded away in camphor. She told me in Spanish that she was keeping it to drape over her balcony when the American troops marched through the streets of Havana.

Some of the saddest, most heart-rending stories came from Guatua, the scene of one the most awful massacres of the war. was there that the Spanish troops descended upon a plantation where a detachment of the insurgents had camped on the preceding night. The family saw the soldiers coming and hung out a white flag as a token of peace. But the bloodthirsty [illegible] paid no attention to it. They killed [illegible] workmen who attempted to defend the place, and then they entered the house and aimed a rifle at the aged father of the family. His daughter ran across the room and threw her arms about him, telling the Spaniards that he was not their enemy. One of the men raised a machete and struck her upon the shoulder, almost severing her arm from the body. She fell fainting to the floor and the wretches then put a bullet through the old man's heart.

I saw this girl in a hut in a Matanzas suburb, where she lay dying, for every one was afraid to help her. No doctor could be found who would minister to her, although an amputation of the arm would have saved her life. She was a Cuban girl, wounded by a Spanish sword. Any physician who would have dared to attend her would have risked his life, and not only his life, but the lives of his family. She opened her eyes and smiled faintly at me when I stood beside her bed, and she murmured in Spanish, "For Cuba!" Those were the last words she spoke. She died the morning of the next day.

A woman of Marinao told me of the awful scene which she witnessed from a hiding place in the cane field. The Spanish soldiers had come upon a temporary hospital, built at the roadside with palms to keep the sun from six wounded insurgents. She had brought them cooling draughts from her house, near by, when she heard the troops approaching and fled for safety into the cane. They built a fire about the wounded men, and as the flame burst upward they picked the quivering bodies out upon their bayonet points, and then threw them back into the fire, saying: "This hog is not well enough cooked yet!" This poor woman's hair had turned white with the horror of this scene which she had witnessed and the ghastly fear she had felt that they might discover her whereabouts, as they saw that the wounded men had been cared for.

MARRIAGE IN THE FIELD.

One of the most dramatic incidents of the war was a marriage ceremony performed at dawn in the mountains of Puerto Principe. Robau, a handsome and well educated young man, whose father owns a large plantation at Puerto Principe, enlisted as a private with General Gomez when the war broke out. He has fought bravely from the beginning until now, and was made lieutenant, then first lieutenant, captain and then major. He recruited his regiment from his own neighborhood, and it is now composed entirely of his friends, all finely bred young men.

Robau was in love with a young girl who was a native of a small village near his father's estate. She was in humbler circumstances than he, and the rigid rules of Cuban etiquette kept them apart. But when the young man first marched through the town with his splendid company of men their horses' bridles were braided with ribbons and they wore wreaths of palm leaves about their hats in her honor. They passed the girl's home, and saluted her as she stood on the balcony with her mother.

Robau went in and asked that he might marry the girl then and take her with him, as he feared that evil might befall her in his absence. But his sweetheart's parents objected, and finally Robau yielded to their wishes and marched away broken hearted. Two days later, when he had gone many miles, the girl dashed to his side, mounted on a horse. She had run away from her home in order that she might be with her lover.

That night Robau sent a guard of two men, with an extra horse and an empty saddle, to the house of a padre nearby. The good priest mounted and rode along between the two men, muttering prayers, for he expected, despite the assurances of his escorts, that he was to be killed. They reached the hills where the regiment had halted and just as dawn broke from the East the young people were married. They are now at Santa Clara, where Robau is in command of 400 men, operating with Seraphine Sanchez and his band of 4,000.

ONE OF CUBA'S HEROINES.

One of the notable women of this revolution is Rosa Hernandez, the wife of Dr. Hernandez, of San Cristobel. She is now in the field with her husband, under General Maceo, taking active part in the fighting. She is young and beautiful, and had only been married a year when her husband was called upon to organize a band of men. He came to his young wife, who was soon to be a mother, and told her that he would do just as she willed, for he felt that his life belonged to her. She answered him that she wished he should go to the war. In a week he had raised a band of 500 men—half a regiment—and, as they marched out of the town, they saluted Mrs. Hernandez, passing her house shouting "Viva la Reine Cuba!"

When her husband had been gone about three weeks the Spaniards took possession of the town, under General Carnellos. One of the lieutenants rode into Hernandez's home on horseback and subjected her to threats and insults. As soon as he had left, she got a horse and joined her husband, riding many miles through the Cuban hills until she found him.

The women of San Juan Martinez have also taken a great part in the rebellion. When the Spanish troops under Cornell were on their way to the city the people met and took a vote as to what course they should pursue; the women casting ballots with the men. They decided to burn their city, rather than to have the Spanish soldiers destroy it. They took their children in their arms and turned their faces toward Guane, walking all the way, as they had given their horses to the Cuban soldiers. Before they left the women set their homes on fire, and when the Spaniards reached the place at midnight they found the city in flames. When the people of Martinez reached Guane they found that the baffled soldiers were still on their track, and they burned Guane, as they had their own city, the women putting the torch to the houses. They afterward burned Montezuela in a similar manner, cutting off the Spaniards effectually. The path of these women and their babies was marked by fire until they reached the protection of the insurgent army.

Hueda Hernandez, an eleven-year-old girl, is one of the child victims of the war. She lived at Cardenas, and innocently took a package given her to carry to some friend. It happened to contain letters from one of the rebels to a woman relative in Cardenas, and the child was arrested, charged with conspiracy against the government.

HORRORS OF THE DENUNCIAMENTO.

The women of Santiago de Cuba have suffered through the horrors of the "denunciamento," which is one of the most barbarous provisions of Spanish law. It means that any anonymous accusation is treated as equal to proof of guilt until innocence is proved by law. As the prisoner is placed, "incommunicado," it is often months before he can have an opportunity to defend himself, and the chances are that he will be shot before he ever sees the outside world again.

Twenty peaceful citizens of Santiago de Cuba, husbands and fathers, were taken from their homes in the night a few weeks ago on an anonymous charge of treason. They were brought to Morro "incommunicado" and after a brief court-martial they were sentenced to the vile colony of Ceuta, Africa. After their departure a sixteen-year-old Spanish boy declared that he had written the denunciamento in fun.

In one home in Havana I found an old Philadelphia lady ninety years of age. She has been living with a rich Cuban family for many years as nursery governess and now she is regarded as one of the family. "I have lived through the American war," she said, "and I am an American woman by birth, but I am a Cuban at heart. Never have women suffered as they have in this war! These Spaniards are not soldiers. You know the saying about them? 'Braggarts in peace, cowards in war, and thieves always.' That is true. They kill helpless women and butcher children and then lie through their Government to conceal their rascalities."

One of the saddest stories of the war I heard from one of the women on the Dolores estate, where Dr. Delgado was recently butchered, and four of his men murdered in cold blood. One of these women was the mother of one of the men who were killed. She told me how they had seen the men marched off by the Spanish regiment.

"I felt in my heart," she told me, sobbing as she spoke, "that my son would be killed, and when I heard the shots a sharp pain pierced my breast. I knew my son was dead. When we came to where they lay dead upon the ground they were drenched with blood, and my dear son's body was hacked to pieces."

She broke down in a storm of passionate weeping, and, falling upon her knees, raised her clasped hands above her head and called down awful Spanish curses upon those who had robbed her of her son.

Those stories and sights are plentiful throughout Cuba to-day. The women are roused to a state of revengeful hate through the loss of their loved ones. There are many women in Havana who have relatives with the insurgent forces. When the men are near the city, as they have been so often of late, the women steal out at night to meet them at the risk of their lives, taking them food and clothing. One of these women said to me:

"My husband was so near Havana the other night that he told me he set his watch by the 8 o'clock cannon. Will you not tell the people of America how sadly we are situated?" she asked me. "The American men are brave and noble, and, though they may not care to interfere in this war, surely they will not allow women and children to be butchered under the very shadow of the American flag. Mr. Cleveland, too, he has a lovely wife and dear children. He must feel for us! We believe in him. We have faith that he will yet send us help."

PRAYING FOR AID.

This is the prayer always on the white lips of these poor brave women. They teach the lisping children at their knees to pray that God will send aid from America. Their sad eyes are turned to the Northern sky, where each night the stars blaze forth in a great cross of fire as though in answer to their prayer, and, raising the babies in their arms, they show them the stars and tell them that it is a sign from Heaven that deliverance is at hand and that the sun will soon dawn upon Cuba's freedom.

On the 7th of January last the rebel forces under Perico Delgado, burned the settlement of Cayajabos, Pinar del Rio. A rebel soldier was carrying an oil lamp to bedaub the walls of a house. Miss Regla Quevedo, a graceful young lady, ran toward the revolutionist and grabbed his arm, at the same time exclaiming: "You must not do that to this house, as it belongs to a Cuban; come with me and oil this other one, which I myself want to set on fire; it belongs to a man who hates us."

It was a Spaniard's house, an officer of the volunteers.

Mrs. Louisa Hernandez, the wife of Damian Peresoto, a political exile in the Isle of Pines, accompanied her husband in his exile, that she might liberate him. When he was working with eleven others cutting wood, she began to talk with the padrone who had charge of them, so as to get familiar with him, and in one of their talks she seized the guard's gun on pretence of examining it. Suddenly she leaped backward, and pointing the gun at the guard threatened him with instant death if he moved. Then taking the guard's machete her husband and his comrades tied the unfortunate man and fled toward the coast, which was very near to them.

On reaching the coast they compelled the captain of the schooner Margarita to set sail for Clenega de Zapata, which they reached in safety. The twelve fugitives made their way to Cuba and joined the revolutionary forces. Mrs. Hernandez is still at Zapata, where she acts as nurse in a hospital.

In the Cuban regiment under Colonel Antonio Nunez there are two young and pretty women, wives of two rebel chiefs. They travel well armed and ride two very fine horses. January 7, when the forces which they accompany stopped a passenger train at St. Critobal Station, Pinar del Rio province, the two young women were the ones to quiet some of the passengers who were frightened, and as some of the passengers were astonished at seeing them armed, they answered: The country needs arms which can carry those arms that she needs for her defence, and does not make any distinction whether they be those of men or women. All of them are the same, with the proviso that their owner should be courageous and have determination.

CHEERS FOR THE REBELS.

When the insurrectionists under Edward Garcia and Rafail Cardenas invaded the settlement of Sabanilla del Comendador the majority of the women residents joined them, receiving them with cheers and cries if "Cuba libre!" The garrison of the town before surrendering defended itself, and during the fight some of the women employed themselves in setting fire to the settlement while others gathered up the wounded and others were taking arms from the rebels so as to fire them themselves.

With the forces of Calixto Alvarez there are eleven women, colored, wives of Eastern chiefs, who have abandoned their small farms in St. Jago de Cuba to follow their husbands' lot. These women busy themselves in gathering up the wounded that fall during the fights and succoring them. All of them carry machetes and revolvers.

Christina Lazo, a daughter of Cuba, was imprisoned by reason of her separatist propaganda, and was locked up in the Jarneo prison. On the 19th of February the forces under Maceo invaded this place and liberated the prisoners. Christina burned the prison, made a speech to the townspeople to prevail on them to join the rebels and then married away with the Cuban troops.

K. M.

Patriotic Women in the Cuban Army.

A SOUTH ATLANTIC ISLAND INHABITED BY LONELY WOMEN.

The Strange Experiences and Romances of a Ship's Crew with the Sirens of The Island of Tristan da Cunha.

The tuneful lady who had just been thinking what a queer world this would be if the men were all transported far beyond the northern sea could have her curiosity fairly well gratified by moving to the Island of Tristan da Cunha. There the male population is fifteen—four of them very old and three still babies, while there are forty-seven women on the rock.

If you look on a map of the world somewhere about midway between the Cape of Good Hope and South America, in the Atlantic, you are likely to find this island. You can distinguish it from a fly speck because the fly speck on the map is bigger. There were fourteen men on the island until six months ago, when the second mate of the wrecked Allen Shaw and an able seaman floated ashore. The mate was married before he was dry, and the sailor narrowly escaped sudden matrimony by dying.

The latest tidings from Tristan da Cunha come by the steamer Mowera, which came into Victoria the other day. On her way from Australia she spoke the ship Dartford.

The captain of the Dartford reported that in latitude 37 degrees 5 minutes south, longitude 12 degrees 16 minutes west, he spoke a small boat in which were three men who wanted to trade potatoes, milk, eggs and penguin skins for clothing, tea, rice and sugar from the vessel's stores. The men explained that the population of their island depended for its supplies on passing ships, but that they hadn't succeeded in catching a ship in six months. They particularly begged for corsets, hair pins and ribbons or any other articles of feminine use, but, as the Dartford was in the cobra and hide business, there was nothing of the sort aboard. When the trade was all made the spokesman of the boat party asked if there were not some men on board who would join the colony.

"We will give any able-bodied man," he said, "as good a house as he wants, cattle and land enough to keep him and a young, handsome wife. He'll have thirty to choose from, and any one of them a wife to be proud of."

The Dartford was short handed, and the captain would not even let the sailors hear the offer, though the spokesman hinted that if it was a question of terms he was authorized to give even greater advantages.

As a final inducement the man that came out of the sea told his own experience.

He came to the island master of his own boat, and a committee consisting of the entire population of the island waited on him and begged him to stay. His crew, a Philippine Island half breed, wanted to be included in the arrangement, and negotiations were progressing finely when an unfortunate incident broke them off. A sudden hurricane blew up while the master of the Jeanie Joud was on shore being entertained and carried the stanch little boat nobody ever found where, and the lonely crew with her. Then it wasn't a question of whether the master should stay. He couldn't get away, and therefore settled down and made the best of it. The young woman who had marked the crew her own considered herself a widow and would have put on mourning, but there wasn't any black cloth in the [illegible]

[illegible]ptain of the Dartford drew from [illegible] master the story of his wooing.

"It wasn't much," he modestly said, "there were only four that were particularly fine girls—but since then a dozen of the finest you ever saw have grown up—and I was doubtful. One of them made up a kind of custard out of yams, though, and while she wasn't, maybe, the prettiest of the four, I thought she'd do more to make a man's home happy, so I took her. Her father, the oldest man of the village, married us."

"And the three that were left?" asked the captain.

"Some has got to be unfortunate," said the modest master.

When they found all their endeavors to recruit their crop of husbands futile, the boatmen cast off and sailed away toward the east to bring their mixed cargo of provisions and disappointment back to their waiting wives and sisters.

Before they went, however, they told a great deal about the simple life on Tristan da Cunha.

Though in such a hopeless minority, tyrant man continues to be the governing party. Several times there have been signs of rebellion, but there are means even on this South Atlantic rock to avert war and preserve the existing state of affairs. The first stronghold of the men lies in the fact that it is impossible to hold the women who have husbands in the same set of harness with those who have none. When Mary Douthert, for instance, shows signs of restlessness Herbert can always bring her down to the stern realities of life with a comment on the general worthiness and attractiveness of young Miss Catherine Hawkins.

Real trouble seemed imminent on a single occasion, due to a rather severe correction administered by the one citizen of French descent to her who had chosen him. The women announced they were going to run things and punish the offender if they had to fight for it. The men took counsel together and made answer that if the women didn't quit their nonsense they would take the whaleboat and leave the island in a body. The emeute was quelled by this single threat.

The nearest point to Tristan da Cunha is St. Helena, 1,300 miles away. And St. Helena is responsible for the fact that Tristan is populated. While Napoleon was a prisoner on St. Helena the English Government maintained a garrison on Tristan. When Napoleon died the reason for garrisoning this island ceased, and the soldiers withdrew—all except Corporal William Glass, his family and two privates. The privates married Glass's daughter. That is, one married her and died in due time and the other fellow got the widow. That was eighty years ago, and the present population is descended from these people for the most part. An occasional castaway has swelled the population, and there is a tradition, have and vigorously denied by the inhabitants, that a prison brig stopped there a [illegible]tter of half a century ago and left a couple of women convicts.

There has not been much history since that time. The men have ever shown a skittish desire to get away, and through the decades quite a number have deserted. There is one page in the island's history that is never referred to by the inhabitants without sorrow. It deals with an occurrence in 1837. At that time there were thirty-two men on the island, and the women only outnumbered them a trifle. The outlook was very bright and they even talked of running a half-yearly boat to the world. As unexpectedly as an explosion from a bottle of milk the future was blighted. Thirteen men seized the only boat one night, after having secretly provisioned her, and sailed away, never to return.

To this constant defection of the men is, of course, attributable the excess of women in the population.

The hope and pride of the island is naturally the three baby boys. The mothers of these three are looked upon as public benefactors. The advent of each boy was hailed as an epoch-making episode, and the mothers naturally go around there feeling that they have done great things. The mother of a boy is a proud being in Tristan da Cunha.

But there is another side to the shield. When a mother in whom the hopes of the nation have centred for a while betrays the confidence reposed in her and brings a daughter into the world her friends drop in to commiserate her and sympathize with her, and if a succession of daughters come through the years people talk about her as they might of one who had accidentally wrecked a train or started a pestilence—not her fault, but still——

As to dress, numbers and difficulties do not altogether stop fashions. Some very pretty and up-to-date costumes can be designed from sail cloth, bark and grass fabrics. Chicken wish-bones will do for hair pins if they have to, and where there is whalebone there is hope as far as corsets go.

There is, to be sure, a dreadful lack of incentive where there are no men, but they live in hopes that some day a fine, big, well-manned ship will wreck on the rocks, and then there will be marrying and giving in marriage until further orders.